No Objection to Declassification in Part 2012/08/30 : LOC-HAK-548-10-19-2

SENSITIVE

SITUATION: HAK TRIP
SUBJECT CATAGORY: TOHAK

MESSAGE / ANNOTATION:

MESSAGE:

IMMEDIATE
O 210138Z OCT 73
FM THE SITUATION ROOM TOHAK 38

TO PETER RODMAN FOR DR KISSINGER

T O P S E C R E T SENSITIVE CONTAINS CODEWORD WH32569

TOHAK 38

HW MIDDLE EAST SITREP NO. 60, 1630 EDT, 20 OCT 73
THE MILITARY SITUATION
GENERAL
1. //A SENIOR ISRAELI DEFENSE MINISTRY OFFICIAL CLAIMS THAT ISRAELI FORCES ON THE WEST BANK OF THE CANAL HAVE INTERDICTED ALL HIGHWAYS AND RAILROADS LEADING FROM CAIRO TO ISMAILIA AND SUEZ, THUS ISOLATING EGYPTIAN FORCES ON THE EAST BANK. HE STATED THAT THE EGYPTIAN ARMY ATTEMPTED TO SET UP BLOCKING FORCES AT KEY ROAD INTERSECTIONS AND OTHER STRATEGIC POINTS DURING THE NIGHT, BUT THAT THIS EFFORT WAS INEFFECTIVE. THE OFFICIAL CLAIMED THAT THE EGYPTIANS HAVE ONLY TWO ARMORED BRIGADES DEFENDING THE CAIRO-SUEZ HIGHWAY, WHICH TEL AVIV VIEWS AS A STRONG INDICATOR OF THE SHALLOWNESS OF EGYPTIAN RESERVES.//
2. //THE ISRAELI OFFICER ALSO CLAIMED THAT THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT SOME EGYPTIAN SOLDIERS ARE FLEEING THE BATTLE FRONT, ESPECIALLY IN THE PORT SAID AREA. HE SAID THAT FIRING BY EGYPTIAN FORCES HAS BEEN SPORADIC RATHER THAN CONSISTENT, A SIGN THAT THE EGYPTIANS WERE LOSING THEIR WILL TO FIGHT. DESPITE THESE CLAIMS OF SUCCESS, THE ISRAELIS INDICATED THAT THE ISRAELI DEFENSE MINISTRY CONSIDERS THE BATTLE ON THE WEST BANK TO BE STILL IN DOUBT.//
3. THE SITUATION ON THE SYRIAN FRONT REMAINED ESSENTIALLY UNCHANGED TODAY WITH BOTH GROUND AND AIR ACTIVITY AT A LOW LEVEL.
THE SYRIAN FRONT

State Dept, DIA, NSA and OSD review(s) completed

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY.

******* WHSR COMMENTS *******

SEC,HOWE,MCFARLANE

PSN:012656 DTG:210138 TOR:2940220

SENSITIVE

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SENSITIVE

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SUBJECT CATAGORY: TOHAK

MESSAGE / ANNOTATION:

4. BOTH GROUND AND AIR ACTIVITY LEVELS ARE LOW TODAY ON THE SYRIAN FRONT. ISRAELI DEFENSE MINISTER DAYAN ADMITTED THAT HE COULD NOT SAY THAT SYRIA'S ARMY, OR EVEN A MAJORITY OF IT, HAS BEEN PUT OUT OF ACTION. HE EXPRESSED CONCERN BOTH OVER THE RE-SUPPLY OF EQUIPMENT TO THE SYRIANS BY THE SOVIETS AND THE MANPOWER CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SYRIAN FRONT BY OTHER ARAB STATES.

5. //THE ISRAELIS ANTICIPATED ANOTHER ATTACK BY THE JORDANIANS TODAY, BUT IT APPARENTLY DID NOT MATERIALIZE. AN ISRAELI MILITARY SPOKESMAN CLAIMS THAT THE JORDANIANS DID NOT ATTACK BECAUSE OF AN ERROR COMMITTED BY SYRIAN COMMANDERS YESTERDAY. HE STATED THAT THE SYRIAN AIR FORCE SENT IRAQI AIRCRAFT TO SUPPORT A JORDANIAN ATTACK, BUT HAD MISTAKENLY DIRECTED THE AIRCRAFT TO FIRE ON THE JORDANIANS. THE ISRAELI OFFICIAL

END PAGE ONE

ALSO CLAIMED THAT ISRAELI MISSILE BOATS SHELLED A WEAPONS ASSEMBLY PLANT AND A BRIDGE ALONG A MAIN SUPPLY ROUTE SOUTH OF TARTUS LAST NIGHT.//

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THE EGYPTIAN FRONT

7. //A SENIOR ISRAELI MILITARY OFFICIAL GAVE AN OPTIMISTIC BRIEFING ON THE PROGRESS OF ISRAELI FORCES ON THE WEST BANK TODAY. HE CLAIMED THAT THE FORCE,

SENSITIVE

No Objection to Declassification in Part 2012/08/30 : LOC-HAK-548-10-19-2

No Objection to Declassification in Part 2012/08/30 : LOC-HAK-548-10-19-2

SITUATION: HAK TRIP
SUBJECT CATAGORY: TOHAK

MESSAGE / ANNOTATION:

WHICH CONSISTS OF TWO ARMORED AND ONE INFANTRY BRIGADES, HAS INTERDICTED ALL OF THE HIGHWAYS AND RAILROADS LEADING FROM CAIRO TO ISMAILIA AND SUEZ, THUS ISOLATING EGYPTIAN FORCES ON THE EAST BANK, THE INFANTRY BRIGADE HAS REPORTEDLY HOLDING THE ISRAELI NORTHERN FLANK WHICH EXTENDS TOWARD ISMAILIA. ONE OF THE ARMORED BRIGADES WAS STALLED YESTERDAY EN ROUTE TO JABAL AL JUFRAH, ABOUT 30 MILES EAST OF CAIRO, BUT SHIFTED ITS ATTACK TO THE NORTH TODAY. THE ISRAELI SPOKESMAN CLAIMED THAT THIS BRIGADE WAS SUCCESSFUL IN INTERDICTING THE CAIRO-ISMAILIA ROAD, SOME 18 MILES WEST OF THE CANAL.//

8. //ACCORDING TO THE ISRAELI OFFICIAL THE OTHER ISRAELI ARMORED BRIGADE ALSO ENCOUNTERED STIFF FIGHTING YESTERDAY FROM THE EGYPTIAN 4TH ARMORED DIVISION. THIS DIVISION REPORTEDLY HAD BEEN MOVED BACK TO THE WEST BANK FROM POSITIONS IN THE SINAI. BY EARLY AFTERNOON, HOWEVER, THE ISRAELI BRIGADE HAD APPARENTLY OVERRUN THE EGYPTIAN DIVISION'S HEADQUARTERS AND HAD ATTACKED THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE EGYPTIAN THIRD ARMY NEAR JABAL AL JUFRAH. THE ISRAELIS ARE REPORTED TO HAVE CAPTURED SEVERAL EGYPTIAN GENERALS IN THIS ACTION.

9. //THE ISRAELI SPOKESMAN STATED THAT THE EGYPTIAN MILITARY CONCENTRATED DURING THE NIGHT ON SEIZING STRATEGIC POINTS WHERE THEY ESTABLISHED ANTITANK DEFENSES. HE CLAIMED, HOWEVER, THAT FAULTY PLANNING AND POOR COORDINATION HAD PERMITTED THE ISRAELI FORCES TO BYPASS MANY OF THESE OBSTACLES. THE ISRAELIS NOW BELIEVE THAT THE EGYPTIANS HAVE ONLY TWO ARMORED BRIGADES

END PAGE TWO

FACING THE ISRAELI BRIGADE NEAR JABAL AL JUFRAH, EGYPTIAN FORCES REPORTEDLY HAVE DISMANTLED BRIDGES AND CROSSINGS NORTH OF ISMAILIA IN ORDER TO DENY THIS AREA TO ISRAELI UNITS. EGYPTIAN FORCES REPORTEDLY WERE ALSO FIRING SPORADICALLY TODAY, AN INDICATION TO TEL AVIV THAT EGYPTIAN UNITS ARE BECOMING DISORGANIZED AND UNABLE

No Objection to Declassification in Part 2012/08/30 : LOC-HAK-548-10-19-2

No Objection to Declassification in Part 2012/08/30 : LOC-HAK-548-10-19-2

SENSITIVE

SITUATION: HAK TRIP
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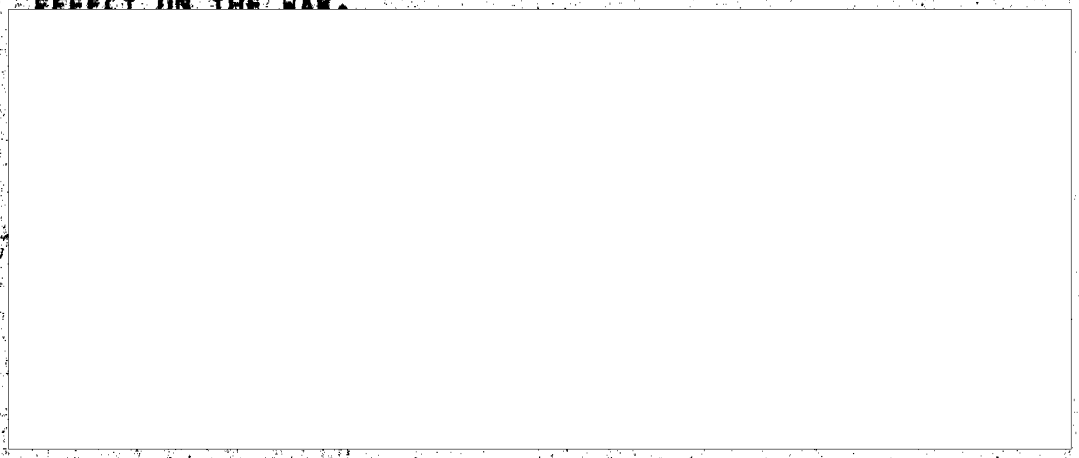
TO CONCENTRATE THEIR FIREPOWER ON THE RAPIDLY MOVING ISRAELI UNITS.//

10. THE ISRAELI SPOKESMAN ALSO NOTED THAT EARLY THIS AFTERNOON, A LARGE NUMBER OF EGYPTIAN VEHICLES ALONG THE SOUTHERNMOST PART OF THE CANAL WERE SEEN MOVING FROM THE EAST BANK TO THE WEST BANK. HE ALSO REPORTED A LARGE-SCALE MOVEMENT OF PERSONNEL AWAY FROM THE PORT SAID AREA, A DEVELOPMENT WHICH TEL AVIV SEES AS AN INDICATION THAT SOME EGYPTIAN SOLDERS ARE FLEEING THE FRONT. THE VEHICLE MOVEMENTS IN THE SOUTH PROBABLY ARE EGYPTIAN UNITS MOVING BACK TO ATTACK THE ISRAELI FORCES ON THE WEST BANK, BUT THE PERSONNEL MOVEMENTS NEAR PORT SAID MAY BE CIVILIANS ATTEMPTING TO ESCAPE THE HEAVY BOMBING THERE. THE ISRAELI SPOKESMAN ALSO CLAIMED THAT THE EGYPTIAN SOLDIERS ARE LOSING THEIR WILL TO FIGHT.

11. THE ISRAELI SPOKESMAN CREDITS THE WEST BANK FORCE WITH DESTROYING MANY SA-2 AND SA-3 SAM SITES. HE REPORTED TWO EGYPTIAN AIRCRAFT WERE DOWNED BY SAMS FIRED BY THEIR OWN FORCES AS THE AIRCRAFT ATTACKED ISRAELI BRIDGES ACROSS THE CANAL. A TOTAL OF TEN EGYPTIAN PLANES REPORTEDLY WERE DESTROYED BY THEIR OWN FORCES ACCORDING TO THE ISRAELIS.

12. LITTLE REPORTING IS AVAILABLE FROM CAIRO ON THE SITUATION. EGYPTIAN WAR CORRESPONDENTS ACKNOWLEDGE THAT TEL AVIV IS CONTINUING TO ADD FRESH ARMORED, MECHANIZED, AND ARTILLERY UNITS TO THE BATTLEFRONT. THEY ALSO SAID THE OUTCOME OF THE BATTLES NOW UNDER WAY IN SINAI AND ON THE WEST BANK WOULD HAVE A DECISIVE EFFECT ON THE WAR.



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SENSITIVE

No Objection to Declassification in Part 2012/08/30 : LOC-HAK-548-10-19-2

No Objection to Declassification in Part 2012/08/30 : LOC-HAK-548-10-19-2

SITUATION: HAK TRIP
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MESSAGE / ANNOTATION:

ISRAELI MILITARY INTENTIONS

15. //A SENIOR ISARELI DEFENSE OFFICIAL HAS PROVIDED INFORMATION ON TEL AVIV'S MILITARY OBJECTIVES AND THE FACTORS AFFECTING ISRAELI ACTIONS.

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ISRAEL'S POSITION ON A CEASE-FIRE

17. SPEAKING ON ISRAEL'S NATIONAL RADIO TODAY, DEFENSE MINISTER MOSHE DAYAN EXPRESSED A WILLINGNESS TO DISCUSS ARAB PROPOSALS FOR A CEASE-FIRE. DAYAN'S WILLINGNESS, HOWEVER, WAS TEMPERED BY A DEMAND THAT ANY CEASE-FIRE PROPOSALS INCLUDE ONE OF TWO CONCEPTS: A RETURN BY BOTH SIDES TO THE PREVIOUS LINES, OR THE RETENTION BY BOTH SIDES OF POSITIONS OCCUPIED AT THE TIME OF THE CEASE-FIRE. ISRAEL, ACCORDING TO DAYAN, COULD NOT ACCEPT A CEASE-FIRE PREDICATED ON THE DOUBLE STANDARD THAT "IN SYRIA YOU WITHDRAW AND IN EGYPT YOU STAY WHERE YOU ARE."

18. DAYAN DID NOT PROPOSE THAT ISRAEL SEEK A CEASE-FIRE, MAINTAINING THAT "EVERY DAY THAT PASSES

No Objection to Declassification in Part 2012/08/30 : LOC-HAK-548-10-19-2

No Objection to Declassification in Part 2012/08/30 : LOC-HAK-548-10-19-2

SITUATION: HAK TRIP
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IN THIS WAR IS IN OUR FAVOR NOW." HE DID CONCEDE, HOWEVER, THAT ISRAEL IS NOT "IN A POSITION THAT IT CAN SAY IT OPPOSES A CEASE-FIRE AND WANTS A CONTINUATION OF THE WAR."

19. THE PRESS HAS INTERPRETED DAYAN'S STATEMENTS AS A SUGGESTION TO EGYPT AND SYRIA THAT THEY SHOULD PROPOSE A TRUCE BEFORE ISRAELI TANKS MOVE STILL CLOSER TO THEIR CAPITALS. IT MAY ALSO BE, HOWEVER, THAT DAYAN THINKS CAIRO AND DAMASCUS ARE IN NO MOOD TO CALL FOR A CEASE-FIRE, AND THUS FEELS FREE TO PUT ISRAEL ON RECORD AS WILLING TO COOPERATE IN ANY MOVES TOWARD PEACE.

END PAGE FOUR

20. FOREIGN MINISTER ABBA EBAN, WHO ARRIVED IN TEL AVIV FROM NEW YORK TODAY, MAINTAINED THAT ISRAEL MUST FOR THE TIME BEING CONCENTRATE ON WINNING THE WAR. HE ADDED THAT "I DON'T SEE ANY PROSPECT OF A CEASE-FIRE AT THE MOMENT."

ISRAEL AND THE AIR WAR

21. ISRAELI PILOTS HAVE PROVIDED US MILITARY OFFICERS WITH USEFUL INSIGHTS INTO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EGYPTIAN AND SYRIAN AIR DEFENSES.

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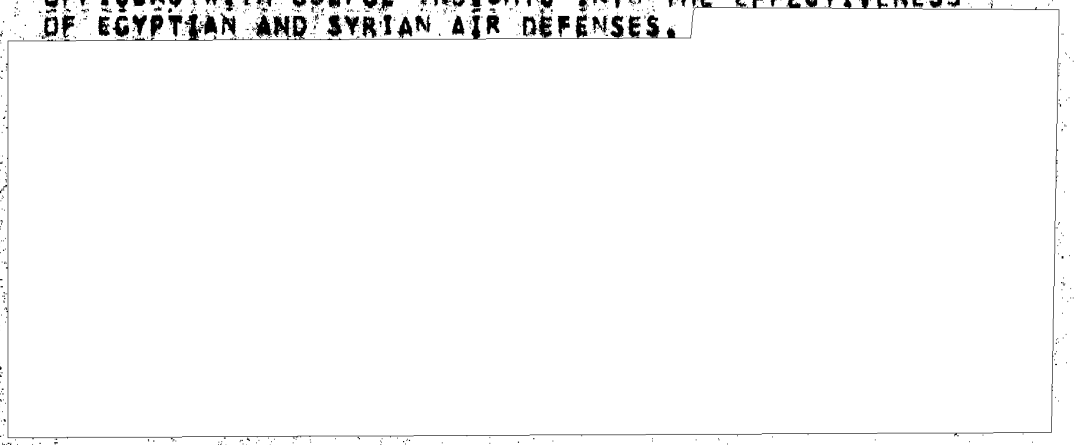

No Objection to Declassification in Part 2012/08/30 : LOC-HAK-548-10-19-2

No Objection to Declassification in Part 2012/08/30 : LOC-HAK-548-10-19-2

SENSITIVE

SITUATION: HAK TRIP
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[redacted]

25. RADIO RIYADH ANNOUNCED TODAY THAT SAUDI ARABIA HAS DECIDED TO CUT OFF OIL SHIPMENTS TO THE UNITED STATES BECAUSE OF INCREASED US AID TO ISRAEL. LIBYA, ABU DHABI, AND BAHRAIN HAVE ALREADY ANNOUNCED A TOTAL EMBARGO ON US OIL SHIPMENTS AND OTHER ARAB PRODUCERS ARE ALMOST CERTAIN TO FOLLOW.

END PAGE FIVE

26. SAUDI ARABIAN OIL EXPORTS TO THE US ARE ABOUT 600,000 BARRELS PER DAY (B/D)--3.5 PERCENT OF US OIL CONSUMPTION. A TOTAL ARAB EMBARGO ON US OIL SHIPMENTS WOULD AMOUNT TO ABOUT 1.8 MILLION B/D IN OCTOBER--ABOUT 10 PERCENT OF US OIL CONSUMPTION. THE ARAB OIL-PRODUCERS MAY REDUCE PRODUCTION EVEN MORE THAN THE 5 PERCENT PER MONTH AGREED UPON LAST WEDNESDAY IN AN ATTEMPT TO PREVENT WESTERN OIL COMPANIES FROM CIRCUMVENTING THE SELECTIVE EMBARGO BY

SENSITIVE

No Objection to Declassification in Part 2012/08/30 : LOC-HAK-548-10-19-2

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SENSITIVE

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SHIPPING MORE NON-ARAB OIL TO THE US AND SUPPLING OTHER CONSUMERS WITH ARAB OIL, IN ANY EVENT, THE COMPANIES ARE CERTAIN TO EASE THE EMBARGO SOMEWHAT BY SWITCHING SUPPLIES WHENEVER POSSIBLE.

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SENSITIVE

No Objection to Declassification in Part 2012/08/30 : LOC-HAK-548-10-19-2